

Application No. 10/811,977
Amendment "A" dated October 19, 2004
Reply to Office Action mailed April 19, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In a computer that communicates with other computers over a network, a method for automatically updating software components at the computer, the method comprising the acts of:

receiving [accessing] a data file from a first other computer associated with the network, wherein the data file includes:

content data; and

component information and version information specifying required software components and required versions thereof that are to be used to process the content data;

comparing the component information and the version information with software components installed at the computer and identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer;

receiving an update table from the first other computer that specifies a second other computer associated with the network from which the required version of the required software component is to be received;

requesting and receiving the required version of the required software component from the second other computer [one of said other computers]; and

using the required version of the required software component to process the content data.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the act of identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer comprises the act of determining that no version of the required software component is installed at the computer.

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4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the act of identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer comprises the act of determining that a previous version of the required software component is installed at the computer.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the act of installing the updated component files.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, [further comprising the act of receiving the data file,] wherein:

[the data file is received from a source external to the computer;]

the data file is a web document; and

the required software component includes functionality associated with a feature of a web browser operating at the computer.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the acts of:
determining that a required version of another required software component is already installed at the computer; and

processing the content data with the required version of said other required software component already installed at the computer without requesting or receiving the required version of said other software component from any other computer associated with the network.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the act of requesting and receiving the required version of the required software component is conducted without requesting or receiving an updated copy of an entire software program that includes both the required version of the required software component and other required software components.

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11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the component information and the version information are encoded in the data file by a publisher of the data file, the data file having been generated by the publisher using development software that includes functionality corresponding to the functionality of the required version of the required software component that is requested and received from said other computer.

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12. (Currently Amended) In a computer that communicates with other computers over a network, a method for automatically updating software components of a processing program at the computer so that the updated software components can be used to process content data of a data file, the method comprising the acts of:

receiving a data file from a first other computer in the network;

opening the data file using the processing software, wherein the data file includes:

content data; and

component information and version information specifying required software components and required versions thereof that are to be used to process the content data;

comparing the component information and the version information with data identifying software components already installed at the client computer and versions of the installed software components;

based on the act of comparing, identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer;

requesting an update table from the first other [another] computer associated with the network, wherein the update table specifies a second other computer associated with the network [location] from which the required version of the required software component can be obtained;

receiving the requested update table;

based on the update table, identifying said second other computer [network location] from which the required version of the required software component can be obtained;

requesting the required version of the required software component from said second other computer [the network location];

receiving the required version of the required software component from said second other computer [the network location]; and

installing the required version of the required software component, thereby updating the software components of the processing software such that the required version of the required software component can be used to process the content data.

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13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the act of receiving the data file comprises the act of receiving a web document [from one of the server computers], wherein the processing program is a web browser and the required version of the required software component is associated with the web browser.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the network is a global communications network.

20. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the act of identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer comprises the act of determining that no version of the required software component is yet installed at the computer.

21. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the act of identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer comprises the act of determining that a previous version of the required software component has already been installed at the computer.

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22. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for implementing, in a computer that communicates with other computers over a network, a method for automatically updating software components at the computer, the computer program product comprising:

a computer-readable medium carrying computer-executable instructions that, when executed, cause the computer to perform the method, wherein the method comprises the acts of

receiving [accessing] a data file from a first other computer associated with the network, wherein the data file includes:

content data; and

component information and version information specifying required software components and required versions thereof that are to be used to process the content data;

comparing the component information and the version information with software components installed at the computer and identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer;

receiving an update table from the first other computer that specifies a second other computer associated with the network from which the required version of the required software component is to be received;

requesting and receiving the required version of the required software component from the second other computer [one of said other computers]; and

using the required version of the required software component to process the content data.

23. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the act of identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer comprises the act of determining that no version of the required software component is installed at the computer.

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24. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the act of identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer comprises the act of determining that a previous version of the required software component is installed at the computer.

25. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the required version of the required component is associated with browser software that operates at the computer and processes the content data.

26. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the method further comprises the act of installing the required version of the required software component after the required version of the required software component is received at the computer.

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27. (Currently Amended) A system of networked computers that is capable of automatically updating software components of a processing program of a computer included in the system so that the updated software components can be used to process content data of a data file, the system comprising

a computer, wherein the computer includes a memory module which stores software components of the processing program that are used to process the data file;

a plurality of servers with memory modules that store updated software components, wherein one of the plurality of servers is a software server with a memory module that stores a table of available updated software components related to the processing program and the network locations from which the updated software components can be obtained, wherein the computer uses a communication module to interface with the plurality of servers;

a communication network that connects the computer with the plurality of servers; and

processing means at the computer for:

comparing component information and version information of a data file specifying required software components and required versions thereof that are to be used to process content data included in the data file with software components installed at the computer and identifying a required version of a required software component that is not yet installed at the computer; and

automatically obtaining the required version of the required software component from a network location specified in said table, wherein the network location is a computer other than the software server.

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28. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the processing means for automatically obtaining the required version of the required software component comprise processing means for:

creating a list of the required version of the required software component and any other required versions of other required software components;

obtaining the table of available updated software components;

requesting the required version of the required software component from the network location specified in said table;

receiving the required version of the required software component; and

installing the required version of the required software component such that the processing program can use the required version of the required software component to process the content data of the data file.

29. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the network locations from which the updated software components can be obtained are associated with addresses of the plurality of servers.

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30. (Currently Amended) A system for automatically updating software components of a processing program of a computer system so that the updated software components can be used to process content data of a data file, the system comprising:

means for receiving a data file from a first other computer in the network;

means for opening ~~the~~ [a] data file, wherein the data file includes:

content data; and

component information and version information specifying required software components and required versions thereof that are to be used to process the content data;

means for reading the component information and the version information;

means for logically comparing the component information and the version information with the software components already installed at the computer to determine whether any required version of any required software component is not yet installed at the computer;

means for requesting from a second computer associated with the network [a source external to the computer] said any required version of said any required software component that is not yet installed at the computer;

means for receiving said any required version of said any required software components sent by the source; and

means for installing said any required version of said any required software component such that the computer can use updated versions of the required software components to process the content data.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Canceled)

33. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein the means for logically comparing is capable of comparing the component information and the version information with data identifying software components already installed at the client computer and versions of the installed software components.